Robert Wright, Sr.
Makes His Homegoing

Long-time Des Moines attorney Robert Wright, Sr., made his homegoing this month.

Wright, a champion for social justice and civil rights, was active in the NAACP for more than 60 years. A member of the Iowa African American Hall of Fame, he was known as Mr. NAACP in Iowa. He represented the NAACP in the development of the Des Moines School District’s desegregation plan in the 1970s and served as co-counsel in the litigation that desegregated the Des Moines Fire Department.

He also was a member of the National NAACP Board of Directors and President of the Iowa/Nebraska NAACP.
Nominee For Econ Agency Brings Deep State Roots

MIDDLETOWN, R.I. (AP) - Keith Stokes traces his family’s presence in Rhode Island to 1769, centuries before microlending, wind power and biotechnology became buzzwords of economic progress.

Now, as the governor’s choice to lead the state’s economic development agency, Stokes faces decidedly modern problems: helping reverse the tide in this financially depressed state, where the unemployment rate is among the nation’s highest, massive budget deficits are the norm, and cities and towns are bracing for drastic cuts in state aid.

Stokes, 51, was selected last week to a one-year term as executive director of the Economic Development Corporation after the chosen head declined the job for personal reasons. The well-connected executive director of the Newport County Chamber of Commerce, Stokes brings to the position local roots, access to top government leaders - he attended high school with the state Senate president, for instance - and a career spent promoting Rhode Island’s small businesses.

“The advantage of having someone like Keith is that he can hit the ground running. He knows the business community, he knows the federal delegation and knows the members and leadership of the General Assembly,” said Senate President M. Teresa Paiva-Weed, who predicted a smooth Senate confirmation process for Stokes.

The job won’t be easy. The state’s been clobbered by the recession and credit crisis, with an unemployment rate hovering near 13 percent and huge losses in the manufacturing, business services and construction sectors. Stokes says no one should expect him to fix the economy, though he’s maintaining an optimistic front.

“This is the best time for change - when you’re in recessions and depressions, when you’ve been knocked off your feet,” said Stokes, who before last week’s nomination had served as treasurer of the Economic Development Corporation. “This is the best time cause we have nowhere to go in Rhode Island but forward.”

Stokes advocates lowering Rhode Island’s tax burden to make it more business-friendly: the state’s 9 percent corporate income tax, for instance, is among the highest in the nation, and Republican Gov. Don Carcieri intends to submit tax reform legislation this year, his spokeswoman said. Stokes also says the state should look into regionalizing services - such as utilities, public safety and education - to achieve efficiency and must do more to invest in small businesses.

Stokes’ ties to Newport run deep. He is a descendant of some of the region’s earliest African American and Jewish families, including some of the original benefactors of the Touro Synagogue - the oldest existing Jewish house of worship in America. Along with his wife, he is an expert and lecturer on the history of both cultures in colonial America. His great-great uncle was the first black elected to the state legislature, and his home is decorated with centuries-old records, portraits and photos that document his multiracial ancestry.

Among his possessions is a small cloth doll depicting the likeness of a young slave girl, an item passed down through his family since the early 19th century. Stokes is taking a leave of absence from the chamber, which he has led for 15 years while championing the improvement of the visitor experience in an area of the state reliant on tourism. He has literally lifted that organization from one that was almost operating like a visitors bureau to one that businesses will go to for advice," said Newport Mayor Jeanne-Marie Napolitano. "I mean, he makes business applicable."

He was a driving force behind the Newport Bristol Heritage Passage, a project linking historic sites in both communities. He has pushed hospitality training for merchants and advocates a streetcar system to alleviate traffic. And he played a pivotal role in preserving Naval Station Newport during the Base Realignment and Closure process, even as other military bases in New England were ordered closed.

He’s taking over a quasi-government agency that’s been in turmoil. The prior head, Saul Kaplan, abruptly resigned in December 2008. A group impaneled by the governor said in a report last April that state political leaders had failed to create a consistent economic strategy and even suggested that the board that runs the Economic Development Corporation be overhauled.

Then, Joanna Morfessis, the nominee selected after a lengthy national search, declined the job last month, citing a relative’s illness.

Stokes agreed to run the agency for a year and says what happens next will be up to the governor.

In his job at the chamber, he has sought inspiration from other cities he considers comparable to Newport - such as Charleston, S.C. - and plans to do similar research in his new position.

“We don’t have to reinvent the wheel. We don’t have the time, energy or resources.”

The Bridgestone Firestone Agricultural Tire Plant in Des Moines, Iowa is one of the largest manufacturing corporations in Iowa. We employ over 1,500 teammates and offer excellent career opportunities. Bridgestone Firestone offers a competitive benefits package, development opportunities, tuition reimbursement program, and leadership and technical training.

If you are interested in applying for a position with Bridgestone Firestone, you can apply several different ways:

- On line at www.firestoneag.com
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- By contacting your local Iowa Workforce Development office
- Send a copy of your resume to:

  Bridgestone Firestone
  ATTN: Salary Human Resources
  4600 N.W. 2nd Ave
  Des Moines, Ia. 50306

Note: If you are sending your resume by fax or by mail, please include the position for which you are applying. Positions are listed online and at the Iowa Workforce Development offices.

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Economy 101: Dropouts Hold Down Unemployment Rate

WASHINGTON (AP) - Nearly 2 million Americans have dropped out of the workforce since last May - and if they hadn’t, the unemployment rate would have risen a lot more dramatically over the last several months.

Either way, joblessness is quite high. The Labor Department said Friday the unemployment rate remained at 10 percent last month, the same as in November and just below the 10.1 percent rate reached in October. The October figure, which was revised down from 10.2 percent, was the highest in 26 years.

Employers cut 85,000 jobs last month, but hiring and firing isn’t the only thing that affects the unemployment rate. Also important is the overall size of the labor force, which is the number of people working and actively looking for work.

The unemployed who aren’t searching for jobs - either because they’re discouraged or because they’re returning to school or caring for a family member, among other reasons - aren’t included in the labor force and aren’t counted in the unemployment rate.

Since May, the labor force has dropped to 153.1 million from nearly 155 million, a 1.2 percent decline. More than 600,000 people exited in December, the most in any single month in 14 years.

Had all those people remained in the workforce and hunted for jobs, the December unemployment rate would have been 11 percent instead.

What worries economists is that many of those people are likely to resume job hunting if the economy continues to pick up. That could boost the jobless rate to 10.5 percent or higher, even if the economy improves and employers start hiring again.

Here, by the numbers, are some more details you can find deep in the employment report.

FROM RED TO BLACK AND BACK AGAIN
85,000: The net total of jobs lost in December
4,000: The net total of jobs gained in November, the first gain in 23 months
127,000: The net total of jobs lost in October
691,000: Average number of jobs lost each month in the first quarter of 2009
69,000: Average number lost each month in the fourth quarter
7.2 million: Total decline in U.S. payrolls since recession began in December 2007

MISERY LOVES COMPANY
15.3 million: People unemployed in December 2009, down from a record 15.6 million in June
12.1 million: People unemployed in December 1982, the record before the latest recession
10 percent: Unemployment rate in December 2009
10.1 percent: Unemployment rate in October, revised down from 10.2
4.9 percent: Unemployment rate in December 2007, when the recession began
10.8 percent: Unemployment rate in December 1982, the highest since World War II

TOUGH TIMES FOR THE YOUNGEST
27.1 percent: Unemployment rate for teenagers in December
15.6 percent: Unemployment rate for those 20 to 24 years old

LONG-TERM JOBLESSNESS
39.8 percent: Proportion of unemployed who’ve been out of work six months or longer, a record
29.1 weeks: Average length of unemployment in December, also a record
6.1 million: Number of people unemployed for six months or longer, also a record
1.3 million: Number unemployed for that long in December 2007, when the recession began

WHERE THE JOBS ARE
46,500: The number of temporary jobs added in December
9,900: Jobs added in financial services and insurance
10,800: Jobs added in education
21,300: Jobs added in hospitals, nursing and other health care sectors
4,000: Jobs added in architectural and engineering services
3,400: Jobs added in computer services

UNDEREMPLOYED
9.2 million: Number of part-time workers who would have preferred full-time work last month
2.5 million: People without jobs who want to work but have stopped looking
17.3 percent: “Underemployment” rate in December if you include the above two categories
17.4 percent: Underemployment rate in October, the highest in records dating to 1994

DECEMBER UNEMPLOYMENT RATE BY GROUP
13 percent: Female heads of households
8.4 percent: Asians
9 percent: Whites
12.9 percent: Hispanics
16.2 percent: Blacks
27.1 percent: Teenagers

“We have a powerful potential in our youth, and we must have the courage to change old ideas and practices so that we may direct their power toward good ends.”
-- Mary McLeod Bethune
State Senator Matt McCoy

Change Is Coming To State Government

A major initiative to reorganize Iowa’s state government for the first time in almost 25 years was approved January 20 by the Senate’s State Government Committee.

The State of Iowa must be smarter about spending your money. The changes in Senate Study Bill 3030 will provide more accountability for taxpayer dollars and will eliminate wasteful spending by combining agencies and delivering services to Iowans more efficiently.

According to nonpartisan Legislative Fiscal Bureau and other sources, these reforms will save significant dollars immediately and much more in the long term. Savings totaling more than $80 million have already been enacted through an executive order by Governor Culver and an additional $57.4 million in savings will come from early retirement initiative for state employees.

We’re hoping to find more than $200 million in savings this session. The legislation is expected to be debated by the full Senate later this week.

To review the state government reorganization bill, go to http://tiny.cc/ReOrg.

Senate Approves Early Retirement Incentive

As part of our efforts to reduce costs in state government, the Senate approved an early retirement incentive package for state employees.

Under Senate File 2062, eligible state employee must apply for early retirement by April 15 and leave state employment no later than May 28, 2010. They would receive cash and health care incentives, paid out over five years.

In addition, the legislation will ensure that those who participate in the early retirement program are prohibited from taking another job in state government. This will put an end to “retirees” using a “revolving door” to re-enter state employment after receiving incentives to retire.

The state would save money by increasing the number of retirements and filling only critical positions. Review the legislation at http://tiny.cc/ESF062.

Additional information on the program is available from Senator Matt McCoy, representing western and southern portions of Des Moines. For newsletters, photos and further information, go to www.senate.iowa.gov/mccoy.

To contact Senator McCoy during the week, call the Senate Switchboard at 515-281-3371.

On weekends he can be reached at home at 515-274-0561. E-mail him at matt.mccoy@legis.state.ia.us.

State Senator McCoy is chair of the Transportation & Infrastructure Budget Subcommittee and vice-chair of the Ways & Means and Appropriations committees. He also serves on the Commerce, Local Government, and Transportation committees.

State Senator Jack Hatch

Helping Soldiers By Helping Their Families

On January 21, the Iowa House hosted the annual Veterans Day on the Hill. It was a great opportunity to talk with hundreds of veterans from across the state about their concerns and ideas.

The families of Iowa soldiers in our communities often speak of the stress they experience when a spouse or parent is called to active duty.

This year, we’re making relocating easier for Iowa’s military families. One proposal calls for ensuring that “trailing spouses” of active military members are eligible for unemployment if they have to leave a job; they won’t face withdrawal fees and penalties if they must leave college mid-term; and they’ll get the assistance they need to transfer professional certifications, including teaching certificates, to their new home state.

We’ll also be able to make sure those who serve our country in the military have the tools and training they need to complete their mission, return home and re-enter civilian life.

Iowa Veterans Home Is Expanding

Last year, the Legislature approved a major renovation and expansion of the Iowa Veterans Home (IVH) in Marshalltown. In partnership with the federal government, we’ll provide a state-of-the-art facility for Iowans who’ve served and sacrificed.

The first phase of the Iowa Veterans Home’s Master Plan was made possible by a state appropriation of nearly $16 million, matched by $29 million in federal funds. The money will be used to construct two new resident-care pavilions on IVH grounds.

Through January 31, you are encouraged to submit your ideas for the naming of these two new buildings. If you have an idea that celebrates the sacrifice, dedication and service of all Iowa veterans, print off a nomination form at http://ivh.iowa.gov and submit it for consideration.

State Senator Dick Dearden

Keeping An Eye On Special Interests

Sunshine can be the best disinfectant. I’m applying that principle to respond to Iowans’ concerns about the influence of lobbyists and special interest groups.

That’s why I’m supporting legislation to make it easier for all interested Iowans and watchdog groups to track lobbying activity at the Statehouse.

Once signed into law, the new changes in Senate Study Bill 3035 will make it much easier to find out who has hired a particular lobbyist, how much they’re paid, and which bills they’re lobbying for and against. This information will be available on the Internet rather than being spread across a mixture of paper and electronic sources.

Review the legislation at http://tiny.cc/CSB3035.

Fewer Iowans Smoking Means Fewer Iowa Hospital Visits

Representatives from the American Cancer Society and doctors from the University of Iowa and Department of Public Health recently visited the Statehouse to talk about the successes of Iowa’s Smoke-free Air Act, which the Legislature passed in 2008.

Dr. Christopher Squier of the University of Iowa found significant decreases in Iowa hospitalizations for illnesses related to smoking since the Act’s passage. For example, Iowa has seen a 24 percent drop in coronary heart disease, an 8 percent drop in heart attacks, and a 4 percent drop in strokes. These results are similar to those found in other states.

The new law is helping to protect the health of all Iowans and saving millions of taxpayer dollars when it comes to healthcare costs.

Additional information

This is a legislative column by Senator Dick Dearden, representing the east side of Des Moines and Pleasant Hill. Photos and further information are at www.senate.iowa.gov/dearden.

To contact Senator Dearden during the week, call the Senate Switchboard at 515-281-3371.

On weekends he can be reached at home at 515-262-1203. E-mail him at dick.dearden@legis.state.ia.us.

Elpis Fellowship — Weekly Meditation

“The Treasures In You”

Scripture Meditation: 2 Corinthians 4:1-7 • Verse of Concentration: 2 Corinthians 7

“But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.”

Right now… at this very moment, you have hidden within, a treasure that can not only change your present circumstances, but can change the world around you. It’s a treasure that can turn poverty into prosperity, sickness into health, and sorrow into joy! It’s a treasure that can change your eternal destiny!

The treasure within you is the all power-full Word of God. Spend time meditating in your Word, each day, and then make the decision that you’re going to share the Word with others, no matter what. Determine this day, and purpose in your heart, that it’s the most important thing you’ll ever do. Finally, trust God for the results. The Word of the Father will not return void, but it will accomplish that in which it’s directed to do! Even if others seem indifferent to you; even if it appears the Word has no immediate effect… keep believing! Your faith will keep the Word alive inside of them, and eventually it will ignite and transform in their lives.

New Normal: ‘Take the time today to sow into the hearts of those around you the greatest gift we’ve received… THE WORD OF GOD!’

Growing Together In The Things Of God

FREE COUNSELING AVAILABLE
CONSUMER CREDIT COUNSELING

TOO MUCH DEBT?

Not enough money left after meeting household expenses to make your loan and credit card payments? We offer confidential counseling for:
• Debt Payment Programs

Before the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth, we were here. Before the pen of Jefferson etched across the pages of history the majestic words of the Declaration of Independence, we were here. If the inexpressible cruelties of slavery could not stop us, the opposition we now face will surely fail. - Martin Luther King, Jr.

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“A Little Bit of This and A Little Bit of That

President Obama “One Year”

President Barack Obama officially served for one year on January 20, 2010.

I believe he has been a great president considering all the mess he was handed. It took George W. Bush eight years to handle this office, and much of it was left in disaster. Why did McCain and all the Republicans who are trying to sabotage every move President Obama makes let Bush get away with so many bad moves? Are they prejudiced or just spoilers? Don’t they realize if they succeed in their ways and succeed in ruining this country by their prejudices, or jealous stupidity, EVERYONE loses, including them.

Whether they believe this or not, we are all in this together!

This is America!

Correction from December 21, 2009 “Little Bit”

There was an inadvertent error in the printing of “A Little Bit of This and A Little Bit of That”: “Celebrity Freaks and A Blackman’s Kryptonite.” The moral of the story lost its moral meaning with the word “meat” typed at the end.

The story should have read… There was a little dog crossing a train track. The train came along and cut off his tail. The dog turned around to get his tail and the train cut off his head. The moral of the story is… “Don’t lose your head over a little piece of tail.”

-NELLE-
Senator Harkin Honors Iowans Joanne And Ray Walton As 2009 Angels In Adoption In D.C.

Senator Tom Harkin (D-IA) announced that Ray and Joanne Walton of Indianola have been selected as 2009 Angels in Adoption for their outstanding work and advocacy on adoption issues. The Waltons, along with 190 other 2009 Angels, were honored at an awards ceremony gala event in Washington last fall.

“Adoption is a wonderful thing, and the Waltons exemplify the generosity and commitment to family that makes Iowa great,” said Harkin. “Joanne and Ray’s compassion and selflessness deserves recognition, and I am thrilled to honor them in Washington.”

Joanne and Ray’s interest in adoption began many years ago. In Joanne’s case, it began with reading a book called “The Family Nobody Wanted” in fourth grade. Ray’s interest developed when he volunteered at an orphanage during his military service in Vietnam. In 1972, following the birth of their oldest daughter Kate, the discussion of family size turned to adopting a child from Vietnam. Marc, arrived as a 10-month-old, very ill little boy in October 1974. Betsy, a child from Iowa, arrived about two months later. Joanne worked for the Holt International Adoption Program in the early 1980s, focusing her efforts on hard to place children. Through her work she met a 6-year-old boy in Bangkok born to an American military man and a Thai mother. With some help from the State Department and then-Congressman Harkin, Scott arrived in the fall of 1982. Again while Joanne was traveling for Holt in Korea she met an 18-month-old boy, blind in one eye and losing vision in the other. Jay came to the Waltons about six weeks later in 1984. Annie they met in an orphanage in Thailand in the mid 1980s. She was blind in one eye and had some learning challenges.

Adoption has been an important part of life to the Waltons, but it was never a goal. Making one decision at a time brought their family of six children together.

The Angels in Adoption program is run by the Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute (CCAI) and provides an opportunity for all members of the U.S. Congress to honor the good work of their constituents who have enriched the lives of foster children and orphans in the United States and abroad. CCAI was created in 2001 by the active co-chairs of the bicameral, bipartisan Congressional Coalition on Adoption (CCA) to more effectively raise Congressional and public awareness about the issue of adoption.

CCAI does not receive any government funding and they rely on the generous support of foundations, corporations, and individuals to accomplish their mission. For more information visit http://www.ccainstitute.org/.

Caption: Starting in the front row and going L-R Amelia Granddaughter, Ava Granddaughter, Joanne Walton, Ray Walton, Jay Walton (son, born in Korea), Marc Walton (son, born in Vietnam), Kate Walton (daughter, birth child), Betsy Walton (daughter born in Iowa), Annie Walton (daughter born in Thailand). Back row includes John Moorlach (Kate’s husband), Mark Tolbert (Betsy’s significant other). Their middle son, Scott was born in Thailand and lives in Oregon. He was not here for the photo.
January 21, 2010

**Hurricane Propels Jackson's Justice Quest At EPA**

NEW ORLEANS, La. (AP) - More than four years after Hurricane Katrina, the single-story brick rancher in Pontchartrain Park where Lisa Perez Jackson grew up stands empty.

Floodwaters long ago ate away the walls of her corner bedroom, where the current head of the Environmental Protection Agency once hung Michael Jackson and Prince posters and studied her way to the top of her high school class.

Faded spray paint, left by search teams to indicate that no bodies were found, serves as a reminder of the day Jackson evacuated her mother, Marie, to Bossier City ahead of the approaching storm.

Katrina was the closest that an environmental disaster had hit home for someone who has spent her career solving environmental problems. Now, she’s in charge of ensuring that all communities are equally protected from pollution.

The storm’s toll on Jackson’s childhood house and on New Orleans, particularly the Ninth Ward where she was raised, has intensified her quest for what’s known as environmental justice. That means involving and getting fair treatment for the poor and minorities, who often endure the greatest exposure to environmental hazards but are outside the mainstream movement trying to find solutions.

It’s this fight that Jackson wants most to be remembered for from her tenure as President Barack Obama’s chief environmental steward.

As the first black EPA administrator, Jackson has infused race and class into environmental decisions even though she acknowledges it’s not a top priority for Obama. She’s changed the way EPA does business with minorities and has called on the predominantly white neighborhoods where Jackson was raised, has intensified her quest for what’s known as environmental justice. That means involving and getting fair treatment for the poor and minorities, who often endure the greatest exposure to environmental hazards but are outside the mainstream movement trying to find solutions.

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NEW ORLEANS (AP) - New Orleans’ black political base is one more victim of Hurricane Katrina. The storm decimated once-thriving black, middle-class neighborhoods, undercutting efforts by black candidates to raise money and build voter support.

All of this is coming into play as the mostly black city readies to elect a successor to the very-public political face during and since Katrina - Mayor Ray Nagin. There’s a good chance his successor will be city’s first white mayor in three decades.

Sensing the difficulty in winning, the most prominent black candidate bowed out of the race earlier this month. State Sen. Ed Murray acknowledged that it would have been difficult to beat Lt. Gov. Mitch Landrieu (pictured), the scion of a prominent white political family which has been popular among black voters.

While blacks still make up about 62 percent of the voters rolls, white candidates have gained traction since Katrina hit in 2005. Whites gained a 4-3 majority on the City Council in 2007, and a white district attorney was elected in 2008.

In the mayoral election, political analysts say race may be less of a factor as voters consider who can accelerate the city’s recovery from the storm and fight its high crime rate.

“I think African-Americans would prefer voting for an African-American, but one that they feel comfortable would do what has to be done” said City Constable Lambert Boissiere Jr., a former city councilman who was among black leaders who rose to power in the 1970s.

But for a candidate to convince voters he’ll get the job done, he has to know where to find them and what issues matter to them. Boissiere said that can be a challenge in some black middle-class enclaves and poor neighborhoods like the Lower 9th Ward, which are still struggling from the storm and remain thinly populated.

“You don’t know how to reach them,” Boissiere said.

Many residents who scattered, disrupting neighborhood political networks, haven’t come back. The city’s overall population, about 450,000 before the storm, remains down by more than 100,000.

Those who have returned often have less money to contribute to black candidates, said Silas Lee, a professor of public policy at Xavier University who did poll work for Murray. He said the storm exacerbated economic problems for many working- and middle-class blacks.

Boissiere, 66, also blames the weakening of the black power base on factors that predate Katrina. He said his generation of black leaders bated economic problems for many working- and middle-class blacks.

Landrieu, the scion of a prominent white political family which has been popular among black voters.

All of this is coming into play as the mostly black city readies to elect a successor to the very-public political face during and since Katrina - Mayor Ray Nagin. There’s a good chance his successor will be city’s first white mayor in three decades.

Sensing the difficulty in winning, the most prominent black candidate bowed out of the race earlier this month. State Sen. Ed Murray acknowledged that it would have been difficult to beat Lt. Gov. Mitch Landrieu (pictured), the scion of a prominent white political family which has been popular among black voters.

While blacks still make up about 62 percent of the voters rolls, white candidates have gained traction since Katrina hit in 2005. Whites gained a 4-3 majority on the City Council in 2007, and a white district attorney was elected in 2008.

In the mayoral election, political analysts say race may be less of a factor as voters consider who can accelerate the city’s recovery from the storm and fight its high crime rate.

“I think African-Americans would prefer voting for an African-American, but one that they feel comfortable would do what has to be done” said City Constable Lambert Boissiere Jr., a former city councilman who was among black leaders who rose to power in the 1970s.

But for a candidate to convince voters he’ll get the job done, he has to know where to find them and what issues matter to them. Boissiere said that can be a challenge in some black middle-class enclaves and poor neighborhoods like the Lower 9th Ward, which are still struggling from the storm and remain thinly populated.

“You don’t know how to reach them,” Boissiere said.

Many residents who scattered, disrupting neighborhood political networks, haven’t come back. The city’s overall population, about 450,000 before the storm, remains down by more than 100,000.

Those who have returned often have less money to contribute to black candidates, said Silas Lee, a professor of public policy at Xavier University who did poll work for Murray. He said the storm exacerbated economic problems for many working- and middle-class blacks.

Boissiere, 66, also blames the weakening of the black power base on factors that predate Katrina. He said his generation of black leaders bated economic problems for many working- and middle-class blacks.

Landrieu, the scion of a prominent white political family which has been popular among black voters.
Bermuda Seeks Help In Fight Against Gang Violence

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP) - Bermuda is reaching out to the FBI and other overseas law enforcement agencies to help break up violent gangs that are threatening the mid-Atlantic island’s image as a tranquil tourist haven.

The British territory, shaken by a spate of rare, deadly shootings blamed on drug gang rivalries, said this week that it has invited veterans of gang wars in the United States and the United Kingdom to provide training and join island patrols.

“Our community is under siege because we didn’t want to get involved - but it is past time to get involved,” Public Safety Minister David Burch said as he announced the requests for foreign assistance and called on islanders to help police.

Four people have been killed in Bermuda in a month - more slayings than the island of 64,000 people typically sees in an entire year. Police say more than 200 people are active in the gangs, which model themselves on groups in eastern U.S. cities.

Bermuda’s murder rate is still low compared with the Caribbean, where drug-related crime pushed homicide levels to near record levels in several islands last year.

But some warn that worse violence could lie ahead unless Bermuda addresses deep social rifts on an island where gun violence overwhelmingly involves blacks who make up about two-thirds of the population. A recent Columbia University study says only 50 percent of black Bermudian males enrolled in public high school graduate, leaving them with little hope of tapping the affluence Bermuda has attained as an international business center.

“We’re going to have an even bigger problem if we don’t get on top of this marginalization of black men,” said Rolfe Commissiong, an adviser to Bermuda’s premier.

The recent violence concentrated in the central parishes near the capital, Hamilton, led islanders to launch an organization that has held peace marches and town hall meetings. One of the founders, Wayne Caines, said a church was moved to act after a member of his church lost a son last month.

“We realized it had struck us right in our very heart,” said Caines, a former senator who is now CEO of Digicel Bermuda.

Help began arriving this week as FBI agents held a two-day seminar with Bermuda police on anti-gang tactics.

A leader of the New York Police Department’s gang division has consulted with Bermuda police by phone, according to NYPD deputy commissioner Paul Browne. Burch said New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg, who has a home in Bermuda, offered to arrange assistance to island police.

Bermuda’s government also has approved the short-term recruitment of officers from the United Kingdom, Burch said.

Premier Ewart Brown issued a statement this week seeking to allay the fears of islanders and tourists alike.

“I want to reassure all our citizens that Bermuda is still a largely safe and peaceful country,” he said. Bermuda’s government also has approved the short-term recruitment of officers from the United Kingdom, Burch said.

“I want to reassure all our citizens that Bermuda is still a largely safe and peaceful country,” he said. "Bermuda is still as safe as always for our visitors.”

Former Howard University President James Cheek Dies

WASHINGTON (AP) - James E. Cheek, who served as Howard University’s president for 20 years and oversaw major expansions at the school, has died. He was 77.

University spokesman Ron Harms says Cheek died at a hospital in Greensboro, N.C. He did not know the cause of death.

Cheek served as Howard’s president from 1968 to 1989. During that time, he was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation’s highest civilian honor, in 1983.

During his tenure, the university’s enrollment increased by 6,000 students, and its budget soared from $43 million to $417 million.

Current Howard President Sidney Ribeau issued a statement saying Cheek’s vision and passion for the historically black college led to bold progress and increased federal support for the school.

Iowa Bystander Church Directory

...how are they to hear without a preacher? Romans 10:14

Cornerstone Family Church
3114 SW 61st Street
Des Moines, IA 50321
Phone: 515-243-2852

Business Office
Monday – Friday: 8:30-4:40
Church Office: 515-243-2852 ext 75

Our Purpose
Helping ALL people find and live their lives for Christ, bridging ethnic, cultural and denominational lines.

Sundays
Worship at 9:00 & 11:00 a.m.
Sunday School 9:45 a.m.
Youth Elevate 9:30 a.m.
Real Life – Ministry for Singles 18-29
Each Sunday at 9:30 a.m.
Transportation to Sunday worship services at 9:00 & 11:00 a.m.

Wednesdays
Bible Study: 7:00 p.m.
Spiral Life 7:00 p.m.
One Youth 7:00 p.m.

Saturdays
Worship at 6:00 a.m.
Merge – Ministry for Singles over 30
2nd Saturday of each month 6:30-9:00 p.m.

Radio Ministry
Fri. 11:30 a.m. & Sun. 7:30 a.m. on Praise 940 AM
Website: www.cornerstonefamilychurch.org

Pastors Dan & Anne Berry

Philadelphia SDA Church
Address: 1639 Garfield Avenue • DSM, IA 50316
Phone: 515-262-7467
Pastor: Rev. Marlon T. Perkins, Sr.
Sabbath (Saturday) Morning Worship: 8:00 a.m. • 10:45 a.m.
Sabbath (Saturday) Church School: 9:30 a.m.
Wednesday Prayer Meeting Service: 6:30 p.m.
Sunday Radio Ministry: 9:00 a.m. • Praise 940 AM

Iowa Bystander Church Directory

...how are they to hear without a preacher? Romans 10:14

Burns United Methodist Church
Address: 811 Crocker Street • DSM, IA 50309
Phone: Church: 515-244-5883
Pastor: Rev. Dr. Willy L. Mafuta
Sunday Morning Worship: 11:00 a.m.
Sunday School: 9:45 a.m.
Wednesday Bible Study: 12:00 p.m. & 7:00 p.m.

Jubilee United Methodist Church
Address: 1621 E. 4th Street • Waterloo, IA 50703
Phone: Church: 319-234-5307
Pastor: Rev. Abraham L. Punshness, Jr.
Sunday Morning Worship: 11:00 a.m.
Sunday School: 9:45 a.m.
Wednesday Bible Study: 6:30 p.m.

Maple Street Missionary Baptist Church
Address: 1552 E. Maple Street • DSM, IA 50316
Phone: 515-262-1931
Pastor: Rev. Keith A. Ratliff, Sr.
Sunday Morning Worship: 8:00 a.m. • 10:45 a.m.
Sunday School: 9:30 a.m.
Wednesday Bible Study: 7:00 p.m.
Free Medical Clinic: 1st, 3rd & 5th Tuesdays - 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

Mount Hebron Missionary Baptist Church
Address: 1338-9th Street • DSM, IA 50314
Phone: 515-280-9163
Pastor: Rev. Bobby Young
Sunday Morning Worship: 11:00 a.m.
Sunday Church School: 9:30 a.m.
Tuesday Bible Study at 7:00 p.m.
Wednesday Prayer Meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Philadelphia SDA Church
Address: 1639 Garfield Avenue • DSM, IA 50316
Phone: 515-262-7467
Pastor: Rev. Marlon T. Perkins, Sr.
Sabbath (Saturday) Morning Worship: 8:00 a.m. • 10:45 a.m.
Sabbath (Saturday) Church School: 9:30 a.m.
Wednesday Prayer Meeting Service: 6:30 p.m.
Sunday Radio Ministry: 9:00 a.m. • Praise 940 AM

Union Missionary Baptist Church
Address: E. Univ. & McCormick • DSM, IA 50316
Phone: 262-1785
Pastor: Rev. Dr. Henry I. Thomas
Sunday Morning Worship: 8:00 a.m. • 10:40 a.m.
Sunday School: 9:30 a.m.
Wednesday Prayer and Bible Study: 7:00 p.m.

...how shall they preach, except they be sent? Romans 10:15

To get your church in our directory call Jon at 515-770-1218!
Judge Dismisses Mississippi NAACP Suit On Katrina Funds

WASHINGTON (AP) - A federal judge dismissed a lawsuit by the Mississippi NAACP and others seeking to block the state from diverting Hurricane Katrina housing money to a Gulf Coast port project.
U.S. District Court Judge James Robertson said the plaintiffs might have a valid policy argument against diverting the $570 million in funding. But he ruled they don’t have standing to bring the case because they didn’t show they would be personally harmed.
The NAACP and other advocates sued U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development earlier this year, arguing that the money shouldn’t be spent on the port when dire housing needs persist. State officials have argued that expanding the State Port at Gulfport is key to creating jobs.
Larry Schoen, an attorney representing the plaintiffs in the case, said they are considering their options and might appeal.
"We believe that the judge failed to recognize the legally proper personal stake that these plaintiffs have in the case," Schoen said. "These plaintiffs all have a stake in the proper oversight of the post-Katrina relief money that Congress appropriated."

No Cameras Allowed In Murder Trial Of BART Cop

LOS ANGELES (AP) - A Los Angeles judge said no cameras will be allowed in the relocated murder trial of a former Northern California police officer accused of fatally shooting an unarmed man.

During a pretrial hearing Judge Robert Perry denied media requests, explaining that based on his experience, "the presence of cameras in the courtroom is detrimental to the search for the truth and justice."
Perry also declined to lift a gag order in the case of Johannes Mehserle. His high-profile case was moved from Alameda County to Southern California over concerns Mehserle would not receive a fair trial because of the racial tensions enflamed by the case. Mehserle is white and the victim, Oscar Grant, was black.
Mehserle, 27, a onetime Bay Area Rapid Transit officer, is charged in the killing of Grant, 22, on an Oakland train platform New Year’s Day 2009. The shooting was video-recorded by several bystanders, shown across the Internet and subsequently used as evidence during a preliminary hearing last spring.
Mehserle has pleaded not guilty. His lawyer, Michael Rains, has said Mehserle meant to use his stun gun on Grant but accidentally fired his handgun instead.
Perry told prosecutor David Stein and Rains that he knows very little about the case and has not seen any videos or read any articles related to it. He suggested that the potential jurors may not know much as well and that the trial could start by mid-May.
"My only intent is that both sides receive a fair trial," Perry said. "I’m coming in completely cold on this matter."
Mehserle sat stoically before the judge as members of Grant’s family sat directly behind him in the packed courtroom with several sheriff’s deputies monitoring the proceedings.
Rains told Perry he intends to file a motion requesting Mehserle’s $3 million bail be reduced and renew another motion asking that the Alameda County District Attorney’s office be removed from the case. The next pretrial hearing is set for Feb. 19.
About 100 protesters gathered outside the Los Angeles courthouse Friday demanding justice for Grant.
Seniors Should Get H1N1 Vaccination Now

New year, same flu. Typically, January and February are the times when we see a peak in seasonal flu. Although we haven’t seen the peak there are high levels of illness in the community due to H1N1 flu. The best way to avoid getting the flu is vaccination.

Polk County now has a large enough supply of H1N1 vaccine that anyone who would like to protect themselves with vaccination is eligible. This means that seniors can and should get the H1N1 vaccine.

This is still a new virus and all of us are at risk for getting sick from H1N1. In addition to hand-washing and staying home when you are sick, getting vaccinated is the best way to reduce the spread of the flu in our community. Seniors can come in to contact with a lot of germs from visiting grandchildren and if they do get sick, pre-existing health problems like heart disease or asthma can put them at risk for complications.

Free vaccinations are available at Moore Elementary every Monday through Friday from 11:00 to 6:30 and Saturdays from 10:00 to 2:00. Vaccinations are free, no appointment is necessary and there is handicap accessibility and seating available.

R. L. Parkey, Sr.

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Where Did All The Jobs Go?

We hear a lot of talk about the many hundreds of thousands of people out of work, loosing the things they hold near and dear, some even living on the street. I know about areas of the United States that are poverty stricken, eastern Kentucky for one, the poverty in these areas are not caused by the things that are happening today, these new things are being caused by evil and greedy people, and being allowed by our evil and greedy leaders. I was raised in an area of Des Moines that was not the greatest area of town.

We lived in an area that was east of east 14th and north of University, not the best part of town. As I look back at our life style, what I find is that we were a lot better off than many people today. My father always had a job; many times he worked two jobs and repaired cars on the side, we always had food and shelter.

A man can’t find odd jobs today, they have all been sent to foreign shores. The thing that made me take a close look at the “why” in all this is the instance of a part I bought for my car. The vehicle is made by General Motors yet the part was made in Turkey.

I bought a part made in Turkey because the company that makes it is located in another country. It caused me to start looking at labels on a lot of things that we buy. We found that our Sears Craftsman jeans are made in Pakistan, my Vanheusen jeans are made in the Dominican Republic, Wrangler jeans are made in the Dominican Republic, a Carhartt shirt made in Bangladesh, Levi’s are made in Mexico.

The list is long and alarming that these people think that they can send all these jobs out of this country and then sell their products to the people that they put out of work here in America.

The law allows that these people only have to pay taxes on money that they spend here in America. The rest of us pay taxes on income. Businesses that take their companies offshore, should be treated as any other foreign company, and maybe they wouldn’t be so willing to re-locate in another country.

R. L. Parkey, Sr.

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State Senator Jack Hatch working with State Senator Steve Warnstadt of Sioux City on legislation to help veterans, reserve and active duty servicemembers. “Last year, we helped win approval of a major renovation and expansion of the Iowa Veterans Home. This year, our goal is to better to support the families of Iowa’s soldiers, especially if they are forced to relocate by a call to active duty or military transfer,” stated Hatch. In January, Senator Warnstadt was promoted to the rank of Colonel in the Iowa National Guard.

Gov. Patterson On Debi Rose: ‘Vivacious New Voice’ For NYC

NEW YORK (AP) - New York Gov. David Paterson says Staten Island’s first black elected official will bring a “vivacious new voice” to the City Council.

Paterson swore in Debi Rose to represent the North Shore at a ceremony at the St. George Theatre on Saturday.

It was the public swearing-in for the 58-year-old Democrat, who took the oath of office in front of a crowd of about 500 relatives, friends and community and political leaders. She previously took the oath in an informal ceremony in the City Council chamber at City Hall on Dec. 29.

Rose is the former executive director of Liberty Partnership, a dropout prevention program. She says she’ll focus on public transportation, health care and overcrowding in schools while serving on the council.

You did the right thing by getting her vaccinated for H1N1 but if she’s under 10 she needs two doses to be fully protected.

H1N1 is still in our community and if your child is under 10 and only had one vaccination, they could still get sick.

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